United Nations A/ES-10/661–S/2014/748

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
21 October 2014

Original: English

General Assembly
Tenth emergency special session
Agenda item 5
Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Sixty-ninth year

Identical letters dated 20 October 2014 from the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council

Pursuant to my letter of 14 October 2014, I am compelled to place on record our absolute condemnation of the criminal, deadly actions being perpetrated by extremist terrorist settlers illegally transferred by Israel, the occupying Power, to the Palestinian land, as well as continued Israeli incitement and provocations against holy sites, in particular in East Jerusalem, in what appear to be deliberate attempts to exacerbate already volatile tensions and create further instability.

On a nearly daily basis, Israeli settlers continue with their terror rampages, persisting with attacks on Palestinian civilians, destruction of properties, and theft of land and natural resources. The latest terrorist crime by a settler occurred yesterday, 20 October 2014, when a settler ran over two young girls who were walking home from school in the West Bank town of Sinjil in a so-called "hit and run" accident. Kindergarten student Inas Khalil, age 5, and Nilin Asfour, age 8, had just gotten off the school bus and were walking to their mothers, who were waiting for them on the opposite side of the street, when an Israeli settler's car rammed directly into them and sped away. Inas and Nilin were both rushed to the hospital. Tragically, 5-year-old Inas was pronounced dead a couple of hours later, while Nilin still remains in critical condition. We condemn this brutal act of Israeli settler terrorism, and we call on the international community to unequivocally condemn this and all other such attacks and terror against Palestinian children under Israeli occupation.

It should also be mentioned that this so-called "hit and run" accident has become a recurring deadly practice by Israeli settlers against the Palestinian civilian population. In this regard, we draw your attention to the following similar incidents of so-called "hit and run" acts in just the past few months: on 25 September, a 10-year-old girl was hit by an Israeli settler in Silwan; on 17 August, a Palestinian man was killed after being hit by the car of an Israeli settler in Occupied East Jerusalem;

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on 14 August, a Palestinian man was hit by the car of an Israeli settler; and on 7 August, a settler hit and ran over an 8-year-old Palestinian girl in the southern West Bank.

Moreover, the following are among the many violent acts committed by extremist Israeli settlers in the recent period, which coincides with the Palestinian olive harvest season:

- 11 October: A large group of Israeli settlers violently beat a young Palestinian woman while she was picking olives in an orchard in the village of Yasuf in the Salfit district in the central West Bank. This attack was the third attack over a span of three days. The day before, a mother picking olives in an orchard outside Yasuf village was brutally beaten in front of her children by 10 Israeli settlers
- 12 October: Israeli settlers attempted to kidnap a 4-year-old child in Occupied East Jerusalem as he was standing at the entrance of the building where his family lives
- 14 October: A mosque near Nablus was set on fire and vandalized in another hate crime by Jewish settlers, who also spray-painted nationalist and racist graffiti on the mosque's walls
- 17 October: Dozens of Israeli settlers damaged and destroyed wells belonging to Palestinians in the Khirbet Samra area of the Jordan Valley
- 20 October: Israeli settlers, protected by occupying forces, took over two Palestinian apartment buildings and land in the Batn al-Hawa area, in the Silwan neighbourhood in Occupied East Jerusalem.

We reiterate that Israel, the occupying Power, is responsible for all of the crimes committed by the settlers it has transferred to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, in grave breach of international law, including humanitarian law and the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. We wish to also place on record that today, Israel's own President, Reuven Rivlin, stated that Israel is suffering from an epidemic of violence that must be treated, saying, "It is time to honestly admit that Israeli society is sick — and it is our duty to treat this disease." In order to truly treat the disease plaguing Israeli society, we call on the occupying Power to first and foremost recognize the illegality and brutality of this 47-year military occupation and the destructive impact it has had on both peoples. Moreover, Israel must act forthwith to hold the perpetrators of such crimes accountable and act to avert the continuation of these criminal, provocative attacks, which are aggravating tensions and religious sensitivities between the two sides, further stoking anger and rage and deepening mistrust.

We must also draw your attention to the continuing Israeli incitement and provocations against holy sites in Occupied East Jerusalem, namely, at Al-Haram Al-Sharif (the Noble Sanctuary), which houses the holy Al-Aqsa Mosque and Qubbat Al-Sakhra (Dome of the Rock). In this regard, on Friday, 17 October, thousands of Palestinians were forced to perform prayers in the streets and alleyways of the Old City of Jerusalem as men under the age of 50 were prevented by the occupying Power from entering the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound. Moreover, Israeli forces assaulted young worshippers as they attempted to enter the Old City for Friday prayers, and many sustained injuries. This follows the provocation of last

week when right-wing Deputy Speaker of the Israeli Knesset and member of the Prime Minister's party, Moshe Feiglin, protected by hundreds of Israeli occupying forces, yet again entered the Al-Aqsa Mosque, leading to violent clashes with innocent Palestinian worshippers, many of whom were injured by stun grenades and rubber-coated bullets.

We reiterate the dangers of such ongoing provocations and incitement. We condemn and reject all Israeli measures and attempts to illegally alter the character, historic and religious identity and legal status of these holy sites, and demand a halt to all such measures throughout Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of our State. This must include a halt to all illegal practices also aimed at altering the demographic composition of the City in grave breach of international humanitarian law and relevant United Nations resolutions. We reiterate the statement made by President Mahmoud Abbas that "the Palestinian leadership will be taking the necessary legal measures at the international level regarding the aggression of settlers against the Al-Aqsa Mosque".

Moreover, the Israeli occupying forces continue to use excessive force against Palestinian civilians, including children, causing death and injury and destruction of property. Over the past two weeks alone, the occupying Power has carried out 55 military invasions into Palestinian communities in the West Bank and arrested at least 51 Palestinians, including six children. One of the most recent victims of Israel's aggression against the Palestinian civilian population under its occupation was a 13-year-old Palestinian boy, Bahaa Samir Badir, who was shot dead by occupying forces during a military raid in the West Bank village of Beit Laqiya on 16 October. Bahaa was shot three times in the chest at close range by an Israeli commander and died two hours later. Tragically, as his family and friends mourn his death, their pain is compounded by the fact that the killing of this child, like so many other Palestinian children, will likely go unpunished and without consequence, without any accountability for the perpetration of these crimes by the Israeli occupying forces, as is the case with the above-mentioned killing of 5-year-old Inas by Israeli settlers.

We reiterate our calls on the international community to condemn these illegal and provocative Israeli actions and to act collectively to compel Israel, the occupying Power, to cease its violations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and to abide fully by its legal obligations and to act immediately to rein in the terror and violence being perpetrated by its settlers. The Security Council in particular must uphold its duty under the Charter of the United Nations to address this situation, which constitutes a constant threat to peace and security in the region and beyond. Contributing to the de-escalation of tensions and the respect of international law should be viewed as an absolute necessity and the collective responsibility of all to ensure.

The present letter is in follow-up to our 524 letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which constitutes the State of Palestine. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 14 October 2014 (A/ES-10/660-S/2014/735), constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed against the Palestinian people. Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable, and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine
to the United Nations